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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

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Thursday, 17 November 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Seck	(Senegal)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mrs. Gueguen Mohsen
	Japan	Mr. Akahori
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Ms. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation: "Enhancing the strategic partnership in the area of countering extremist ideology"

Letter dated 11 November 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2016/965)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation: "Enhancing the strategic partnership in the area of countering extremist ideology"

Letter dated 11 November 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2016/965)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following to participate in this meeting: His Excellency, Mr. Hameed Opeloyeru, Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation; Mr. Miroslav Jenča, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs; and Mr. Souleymane Bachir Diagne, Professor and Chair of the Department of French and Romance Philology at Columbia University.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/965, which contains a letter dated 11 November 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to Mr. Opeloyeru.

Mr. Opeloyeru: At the outset, I would like to express our thanks and appreciation to the Government of Senegal for having taken the initiative of organizing this timely meeting. The fact that the Security Council has agreed to convene today's meeting on cooperation between the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the United Nations shows clearly the importance it rightly attaches to this event. I would like to also underscore the significance of the excellent ideas contained in the concept note prepared by the delegation of Senegal (see S/2016/965), which further develops this vital issue.

Allow me to avail myself of the opportunity to congratulate Senegal on its outstanding performance during its tenure as a non-permanent member of the Security Council and the presidency of the Council for this month. I wish to also convey my gratitude to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for the tireless efforts he has exerted to strengthen the cooperation, which has now reached a strategic level, between the United Nations and OIC. We share his vision of the strategic cooperative relationship between our two organizations.I would like to also congratulate, on behalf of the Organization, Mr. António Guterres, for his election to become the next Secretary-General.

The goals and objectives of OIC and the United Nations are broadly similar. Both organizations are devoted to the cause of international peace, security and development, and share common challenges in all domains of human endeavour. The OIC vision, which puts people first, aims to develop human capital and achieve inclusive growth. It envisions its role as an effective partner for peace and development in the world.

Entrusted with a mission to defend the collective interests and just causes of its member States, OIC, based on its Charter, was established on the noble principles of peace, harmony, tolerance, brotherhood and equality of all human beings. The preamble of its Charter reaffirms the commitment of its Member States, which are all United Nations Members, to the Charter of the United Nations. It has therefore, since its establishment, set for itself as a primary task the realization of the principles and purposes of the United Nations, and has strived consistently to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. That is why OIC continues address on a regular basis many issues that also top the agenda of the Security Council, such as the Middle East, Syria, Somalia, Mali, Libya, Afghanistan and the Central African Republic.

OIC and the United Nations have engaged in successful bilateral coordination and exchanges, which have been organized in Geneva and Jeddah, and thereby enhanced our levels of cooperation and sharing of best practices. In his recent statement, in September before the annual coordination meeting of OIC Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the current General Assembly session, the United Nations Secretary-

General highlighted the successful partnership that has been developed by the two organizations in all areas of mutual concern and interest. On our part, we attach great importance to that relationship and are determined to even further enhance it with the aim of promoting peace, justice, human rights and development.

Based on our firm belief in the critical role that international organizations play, OIC has deployed tremendous efforts to build and sustain a network of close cooperative relationships, not only with United Nations but with other regional and subregional organizations, in order to secure a broad and inclusive platform for the benefit of global peace, security and socioeconomic development.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation is a natural partner of the United Nations in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, the two of which are increasingly threatening every society, as well as international peace and security. OIC has consistently been at the forefront in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. Cooperation with key international and regional partners in combating terrorism is among the key objectives of the OIC Charter. Adopting its code of conduct, as well as the Convention on Combating International Terrorism, in 1994 and 1999, respectively, OIC was among the first to formulate a clear and principled position against terrorism.

Fully committed to cooperating with the United Nations Secretariat and its relevant agencies, the OIC Secretary General welcomed the United Nations Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism right after its release. Similarly, the OIC Member States expressed their support to the Plan of Action during the OIC Summit, held in Istanbul in April.

OIC views the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy as a viable guideline for the Member States to counter terrorism, and the Plan of Action as a meaningful contribution to the effective implementation of pillars I and IV of the Strategy. As far as measures to eliminate the spread of terrorism are concerned, OIC organized, jointly with the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED), a workshop back in 2013, to promote the implementation of resolution 1624 (2005). Currently, we are in talks with CTED to organize a second workshop with a broader scope, including the implementation of both resolution 1624 (2005) and resolution 2178 (2014). We are also in talks with CTED to see how we can benefit from its legal expertise as the OIC undertakes a revision of the OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism.

Similarly, we are discussing with the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force how we can cooperate towards promoting the implementation of the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. In that sense, one of the concrete projects under consideration is a high-level event on the prevention of youth radicalization in the Middle East.

OIC believes that the first step in countering radicalization and preventing violent extremism should be to deprive terrorist groups of legitimacy in the eyes of the people they exploit by repudiating the very arguments they use to justify their criminal acts. On its part and based on its commitment to fighting terrorism and countering violent extremism, OIC works to delegitimize terrorist ideologies by developing counter-narratives to such extremist ideologies and propaganda, and by elevating credible and authentic religious voices that support tolerance and non-violence.

Earlier this month, in partnership with the Islamic, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, OIC organized a workshop at ISESCO headquarters in Rabat as part of its efforts to combat extremism and promote a moderate Islamic narrative. The workshop discussed the role of religious education in promoting peace and combating violence. More specifically, it discussed ways in which religious schools and institutions can contribute to the broader education experience in promoting a proper interpretation of Islam and preventing children and youth from falling into trap of extremists.

Moreover, on 3 October, the OIC established a Centre for Dialogue, Peace and Understanding within its General Secretariat, and officially launched its website during the forty-third session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Tashkent later in the month. The Centre's primary mission is to counter incitement to all forms of terrorism, violence and extremism, particularly incitement through social networking platforms, media and cyberspace. Accordingly, the new OIC Centre aims to debunk extremist narratives through counter-messaging over social media outlets, as well as messaging on ideological subjects targeting Muslim youth, and to produce videos and animations

exposing the reality of terrorist groups claiming to be Islamic.

The OIC Programme of Action for 2016-2025, entitled OIC 2025, is anchored in the provisions of the OIC Charter, while the directions emanating from the OIC forums provide the conceptual framework for its development paradigm. It focuses on 17 priority areas, which include peace and security; poverty alleviation; trade, investment and finance; employment, infrastructure and industrialization; science, technology and innovation; climate change and sustainability; moderation, culture and interfaith harmony; the advancement and empowerment of women; human rights, good governance and accountability; information and communication technology and digital structure, among others.

The OIC Programme of Action has also given prominence to development programmes, including physical and human capital development, poverty eradication, the provision of social safety nets and youth empowerment. It is therefore our strong belief that OIC-2025 will serve to our member States as a solid basis for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Accordingly, in its capacity as one of the leading intergovernmental organizations in the area of South-South cooperation, OIC has developed strong partnerships with the relevant institutions of the United Nations for the implementation of its various socioeconomic programmes aimed at promoting peacebuilding and conflict prevention among its 57 member States.

As international peace and development are now faced with many difficulties and challenges, it is imperative to respond to them collectively at the national, regional and international levels. In a rapidly changing world, strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and OIC will both promote multilateralism and boost the international collective security mechanism. To that end, OIC has continued to play an important role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, promoting post-conflict reconstruction and defusing humanitarian crises in its member States. It has also been active in combating violent extremism and terrorism, as well as in promoting socioeconomic development, as important contributions to the global efforts in the enhancement of international peace and security.

In that regard, OIC has expressed on many occasions that it stands ready to develop effective partnership with the United Nations to strengthen cooperation in all areas and to develop early responses to disputes and emerging crises. Consequently, the OIC General Secretariat has made sustained efforts to increase the role of the Organization in the maintenance of peace and security, conflict prevention and conflict resolution. In that context, OIC has set up a Peace, Security and Mediation Unit and a Department for Outreach and Dialogue. It has just launched its messaging centre to counter the narratives and discourse of extremists who seek to disrupt global peace and security.

In that regard, OIC has made valuable contributions to the work of the United Nations in the areas of conflict prevention, crisis management, mediation, humanitarian assistance, the promotion of human rights, good governance, the rule of law and sustainable development through the many political, economic and social instruments and resources available to it. Accordingly, OIC has hosted at its headquarters in Jeddah a number of international contact groups, such as those for Afghanistan and Somalia, as well as regional organization mediation meetings and counter-terrorism workshops. The United Nations-OIC biannual consultation meeting provides an excellent opportunity for both organizations to identify all areas of cooperation, with a clear matrix and specific time frame for implementation.

We look forward to more engagement with the United Nations to enhance the capacity of OIC on the basis of its needs and strategic priorities so as to enable it to act as an effective partner to the United Nations in addressing the immediate and future challenges that face the Muslim world. The example of partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in the areas of peace, security and development is a good example to be followed in that regard.

In conclusion, I should like to renew the commitment of OIC to remaining a strong and active partner of the United Nations in addressing issues of mutual interest and concern, as well as current and future challenges, in defence and promotion of global peace, security and development. We have achieved a great deal together, but I believe that more remains to be done. And it is only through close and coherent cooperation, collaboration and coordination that both organizations can make our world a more prosperous and secure environment for all our peoples.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Opeloyeru for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jenča.

Mr. Jenča: I thank Senegal for organizing this briefing on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The holding of this meeting clearly demonstrates that the two organizations are more than ever willing to work together to address global and regional challenges. The magnitude and complexity of those challenges are simply too big for any country or organization to tackle alone. To be successful in preventing and resolving conflicts, we need to join forces with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to devise joint strategies and draw on our comparative advantages.

In that regard, the Secretary-General has taken note of OIC Programme of Action 2016-2025, adopted by the Islamic Summit Conference in Istanbul in April, and its Ten-Year Programme of Action, which identified conflict situations as a major challenge facing the Islamic Ummah in the twenty-first century. The Secretary-General welcomes the communiqué of the thirteenth Islamic Summit Conference and its support for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

The United Nations has been working closely with OIC for more than 20 years to promote a culture of peace, tolerance and understanding. In the past years, the United Nations, particularly through the Department of Political Affairs, has stepped up its cooperation with the regional organization and has engaged with it to promote a deeper political dialogue. There is no doubt that our cooperation has not been without challenges; resources, capabilities and mandates vary, and our memberships, although overlapping, are different. The best approach to those challenges is to deepen our strategic dialogue to forge common approaches to emerging crises.

In that sense, cooperation between the United Nations and OIC is reinforced through direct contact between the secretariats of the two organizations, as well as the specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations system and OIC. The United Nations Secretary-General and the OIC Secretary General meet during General Assembly sessions and on many other occasions. The United Nations supports the OIC call to strengthen its role in conflict prevention, confidence-building, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation in Member States, as well as in conflict situations involving Muslim communities.

The United Nations has taken a number of steps to institutionalize its relationship with OIC by helping to strengthen its capacity through mediation and electoral assistance, and by holding desk-to-desk talks with OIC on areas of mutual concern, such as peace and security, economic cooperation and humanitarian issues. The secretariats of the United Nations and the OIC hold general cooperation meetings every two years, as mandated by the General Assembly. Those meetings are attended by a large number of agencies from organizations, and set objectives and metrics for implementing joint projects and activities. The thirteenth General Cooperation Meeting took place in May at the United Nations Office in Geneva.

The United Nations and OIC share common objectives in promoting and facilitating the Middle East peace process and the question of Palestine. The Extraordinary OIC Summit on Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif held in Jakarta adopted a resolution entitled "United for a Just Solution", which reaffirmed the positions of Member States, as well as the Jakarta declaration to pursue concrete steps in support of Palestine and the protection of holy sites in East Jerusalem. In addition, at the latest Security Council open debate on the Middle East (see S/PV.7792), OIC reiterated the need to preserve the two-State solution and for the Council to act on the settlement.

On Yemen, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Kingdom Department for International Development and OIC co-chaired a high-level event on the humanitarian situation in Yemen. The meeting generated more than $100 million in additional funding for the 2016 Yemen humanitarian response plan.

The United Nations appreciates OIC support for a peace process in Afghanistan, the realization of which is crucial to the long-term growth and stability of the country. Despite some delays, the planned international OIC Ulema Conference on Afghanistan is a positive step towards constructive dialogue aimed at strengthening the foundations of peace and national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

In the Sudan, the partnership between the United Nations and OIC remains an indispensable part of the

collective efforts of the international community to bring peace, security and development to the country. In Darfur, the core of the partnership has been OIC support, under the leadership of Qatar, for the signing and the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. We need to continue this level of engagement to achieve an all-inclusive peace process that addresses the root causes of the conflict and ensures durable solutions.

In Somalia, the United Nations and OIC maintain a critical partnership in State-building and in promoting comprehensive peace and security. The challenge now is for the international community to harmonize its support to achieve comprehensive progress towards common objectives that include coordinated support to the security sector, preventing violent extremism, community recovery, and the extension of basic services at the local level.

In Mali, OIC was a member of the international mediation team during the 2014-2015 inter-Malian dialogue, and remains a committed member of the Agreement Monitoring Committee to this day. During the electoral process in the Central African Republic at the end of 2015, OIC played an instrumental role in defusing tensions among rival political parties in the country. In agreement with Chad, OIC successfully called on the Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique to cease hostilities in the Central African Republic and allow the elections to take place in areas that were under its influence.

The United Nations appreciates OIC support for the political dialogue process in Libya. We would welcome a greater role of OIC in supporting the United Nations mediation efforts in the country and in encouraging OIC member States to use their leverage with Libyan parties to make the compromise needed to fully implement the Libyan Political Agreement.

OIC has played a key role in Sierra Leone's recovery efforts since the civil war there, and more recently in the aftermath of the Ebola outbreak. It is worth mentioning that the last meeting of the OIC Contact Group on Sierra Leone, which was held in New York at the ministerial level on 19 September, focused, inter alia, on progress made in the Ebola recovery. I would also like to note the continued importance of the still-active OIC Trust Fund for Sierra Leone, which was established in 2002 to assist the process of reconciliation and rehabilitation. The United Nations is thankful to OIC members for their ongoing economic cooperation with Sierra Leone, particularly in the areas of agriculture, natural resources and energy.

The United Nations continues to collaborate and strengthen its electoral engagement with OIC. That involves the training of electoral staff and observers and support towards the establishment of the database and institutional memory of the organization. In addition, the Electoral Assistance Division of the United Nations Development Programme provides technical electoral assistance to a number of OIC member States.

Let us use this valuable Security Council meeting to reaffirm and deepen our common commitment to promoting peace and respect for human rights and to offer a better opportunity for all peoples of those regions and the world.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Jenča for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Diagne.

Mr. Diagne (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to say what an immense honour it is for me to be able to address the Council in a meeting dedicated to a topic of such importance. For that honour, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having once again expressed your confidence in me.

I would also like to clarify that my contribution to this meeting is from an academic perspective. I am a philosopher who has long been engaged in the study, among other things, of the intellectual and spiritual traditions of Islam. Islamic philosophy is one of my specialities. I say this by way of an apology in advance, as I may not speak the language of international institutions, but I hope Council members will forgive me for that.

I would like to highlight the phrase "intellectual and spiritual traditions of Islam" that I used earlier. I think that such language needs to be underscored, because in the sound and fury of the violence being perpetrated today in the name of religion, we may lose sight of the fact that these religions have long and deep-rooted traditions that ultimately express humankind's aspiration to achieving its full potential. I believe that is a point we need to insist upon.

In my capacity as a philosopher and an academic, I would therefore like to share some of my own thoughts, which are focused on the third question in the concept

note before us (S/2016/965, annex), concerning the promotion of interfaith and intercultural dialogue. The other reason for this choose, beyond my interest in it as a philosopher, is that such promotion of interfaith and intercultural dialogue is and always has been a major policy direction of my country, Senegal.

The question raised by this issue, I believe, is twofold. Its first aspect is what needs to be promoted within and interfaith and intercultural dialogue. The second aspect, is how can that be done?

On the first, it is not merely an abstract exercise of comparative religions, whatever the philosophical interest of such a dialogue might be. It will be agreed that such a dialogue must be focused on the universal affirmation of values that enable coexistence on our shared planet, which is now more united than ever before in the history of humankind. Respect for universal human rights — and these human rights are universal because they can be translated into all languages, in all cultures and all spiritual and philosophical traditions — is certainly one of those values to be promoted in the framework of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). I would like to further underscore two values that I think need to serve as the cornerstone of this will to live together.

The first is pluralism. I stress that notion because it seems to me that pluralism is the authentic response to extremist violence, to all forms of violence based on tribalism and all murderous identities, which, unfortunately, we are seeing propagate and spread everywhere in our world. The second great value on which this cooperation should be based is what I will call ecological awareness.

It seems to me that fruitful cooperation between the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations must seek to promote pluralism. That requires all spiritual traditions, including Islam, to be aware of their capacity to be open to differences and to oppose exclusivism. Let there be several sects, let there be many interpretations. That is not a problem. The problem arises when one interpretation declares itself to be exclusive, when a sect declares itself to be the only way. That is where the promotion of pluralism is important.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations share a belief in the ongoing mission of advocating the unity of a human community in respect for diversity, which is one of its constituent features. Pluralism is evoked in the sacred text of Muslims when it says that, rather making of humankind a single and homogeneous community, God has confronted people with the tests of difference by enjoining people to respond with competition in good works, because, ultimately, says the text, only God knows what he wants to see in the nature of our variety.

It seems to me that this states clearly that plurality, differences, are natural things, that differences are in the natural order of things and that it is right and proper that it is so. In addition to the reference in the texts, a rich intellectual and spiritual tradition supports what I have just said, in the sense of promoting pluralism. It is pressing that in the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Islamic Cooperation, promotion of pluralism should be at the very heart of dialogue and exchanges.

I also think that interreligious and intercultural dialogue organized in cooperation between the Organization for Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations must focus on — and here I move to the second value that I mentioned — the promotion of what I call ecological awareness. That is an urgent and pressing need in our times, when the concept of climate change has become tangibly clear, in spite of all the denials that we can unfortunately hear here and there.

The reason why I refer to the value of ecological awareness is because religions have a natural role to play in this task. It will be for the cooperation between the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations to show that this is the case for Islam. The reason for bringing this up in a conversation on, especially, the fight against extremism and violence is because it is necessary to draw attention to the nameless violence that is carried out against our common human security, and that is ecological violence. This is underscored because of the significance of that central notion in Islam, that the human is the Lieutenant of God on Earth. In a word, he is the Caliph. Now this lieutenancy, this Caliphate, confers on the human the responsibility to care for the integrity of creation and its ongoing renewal.

To quickly evoke Islam's philosophic tradition on that point, I recall one element of the Islamic intellectual philosophical tradition, a philosophical novel of a twelfth century Andalusian author, Abou Bakr Ibnou Tufail, who wrote a philosophical novel, entitled "Hayy Ibn Yaqzan". It is a proper name. One

of the many lessons that can be drawn from this novel is that for the individual, achieving full awareness of what he or she is, what he or she can become, and what is his or her duty towards the Creator — that is to reach an understanding of the responsibility to protect the environment and all beings with which we share our Earth.

That is why I evoked the second value as being at least as important as that of pluralism in building cooperation that will truly promote human security.

In conclusion, I direct attention to one word — "how", which is one of the questions I had asked. The answer to the "how" is single word — education. For human security there are immediate measures that must be taken to respond to violence. This point was underscored by the Assistant Secretary General of the OIC. But the true, lasting response is education. The preamble to the UNESCO Constitution reminds us that acts of violence begin in the minds of men, and therefore it is in the minds of men that barriers to extremism must be built. That is why it is vital that cooperation between the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the United Nations should be firmly founded on education. They must pursue joint efforts to develop together education in pluralism and education in ecological awareness, the two values on which I focused my statement.

Once again, I thank you, Mr. President, for your trust, and I also thank the Council members for their attention.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Souleymane Bachir Diagne for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall begin by stating the obvious: the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is a fundamental actor for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is a fundamental actor in the relations of the Security Council with other organizations. I also underscore that the role of the OIC arises from the fact that societies with Muslim majorities are those that are paying a very high price for terrorism — which, I stress, has no roots, no justification of a religious nature. I say that again and again. Therefore the Organization of Islamic Cooperation can play — and does play — a fundamental role in all those Islamic societies that are threatened.

We engaged in some reflection in preparation for today's discussion, and we have identified four important areas in which I think it is possible to forge better connectivity between the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the United Nations in general.

First is the area of preventive action. Then, in a very simple and straightforward analysis, I will look at how we can cooperate better in the short, medium, and long terms. If Council members will indulge, I will provide a brief summary of my written statement on what we think can be done in the area of preventive diplomacy.

The first measure under preventive diplomacy that we have identified is the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/70/674). In that regard, the role of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation is fundamental. While there is an array of measures that can be developed, I shall highlight only one. I believe that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation could contribute to a broader dissemination of the ideas and spirit of the Plan of Action throughout the societies of its member States. In the area of preventative diplomacy, I would like to underscore women. In general, they play a key role in preventing violent extremism. As we are all aware, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and UN-Women are already working jointly on a number of interesting initiatives in that regard. And, with regard to preventive diplomacy, we in Spain have worked with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, in particular in the context of a seminar we hosted in Alicante, where together we came up with a set of ideas on mediation that, frankly, are very interesting.

Secondly, with regard to how we can work better in the short-term, I would mention Spain's proposal to establish a task force of religious leaders for crisis situations, which would be under the aegis of the Secretary-General. As Spain proposed, the task force would be a rapid-reaction force that would be deployed immediately in reaction to any emerging crisis involving interreligious issues or violent extremism. Also in the short-term, I believe we must accord a louder and more powerful voice to the victims of terrorism. Spain did that here through an Arria Formula meeting during which, for the first time, victims of terrorism in Spain participated. I believe that victims of terrorism — and I am sorry to say it, for they are victims — can be key allies in combating violent extremism. Lastly in terms of short-term action, we believe that we must continue to make an effort to provide a counternarrative to

terrorists' narratives, as Mr. Diagne stated in his briefing. In that regard, as one of the co-sponsors of the Alliance of Civilizations, Spain has proposed the idea of establishing a supra-national, public/ private committee on tolerance that would contribute to the dissemination of positive messages and the development of a counternarrative to debunk extremist narratives on the Internet and social networks.

Turning to the medium-term, we have proposed the deployment of experts ion interreligious and intercultural areas as part of peacekeeping operations. For a deep-rooted understanding of cultural and religious sensitivities is vital if our peacekeeping operations are to be more effective. We are also promoting the establishment of platforms for peace for religious leaders in areas of conflict, such as Syria, Iraq, Israel and Palestine, among others.

With regard to long-term efforts, what do I intend by that term? The answer is simple. I believe that the long-term involves youth. Only 20 per cent of young people claim that religious reasons are behind their radicalization and recruitment by armed or terrorist groups. "Long-term" means talking to and about the 1.8 billion young people throughout the world. It means taking every possible precaution to ensure that they have a proper education, which is a necessary, but not exclusive, condition to prevent them from being attracted to extremist and violent ideologies.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight the work carried out by Egypt's Al-Azhar University, which has set up a centre to analyse all the decrees and identify those that could most likely to attract young people into joining or participating in extremist groups.

I have greatly shortened my statement so as to make the best use of time. Those who wish to can read the entire text, which will be made available on the webiste of the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations.

Mr. Yelchenko (Ukraine): First of all, I would like to thank today's briefers for their contributions to our debate. I am also grateful to you, Mr. President, for focusing our deliberations on this particular subject. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is active in various fields, and today we are discussing cooperation between our two organizations in countering extremist ideology, which has become a topical issue for Member States of both our organizations.

Preventing violent extremism has become one of the most pressing priorities for the international community. This evil and its gravest form — terrorism — threaten our core values and principles, including democracy, human rights, the rule of law, equal opportunities and freedom. The threat now has a global character, and therefore requires the full consolidation of the efforts of all international actors and the utilization of their comparative advantages. Therefore, cooperation between the United Nations and OIC in countering terrorist and violent extremist ideologies advocated by such terrorist entities as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, Al-Qaida and their affiliates has never been more important.

Why is that so important? It is because terrorism does not begin with guns and bombs, but words. Those who want to plant hatred and intolerance in people's minds should be stopped before the seeds of evil sprout and their disciples turn into merciless tools for killing. Our efforts should not be limited to a media-driven campaign. What we need is a comprehensive approach with long-term actions to address violent extremism and its root causes, based on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Such a strategy should involve not only countering extremist ideology disseminated through the media and the Internet, but also developing persuasive context-specific counternarratives and messages to neutralize terrorists' influence on persons belonging to the target audience, while eliminating terrorist focal points of radicalization. While addressing the need to intensify our common work on preventing the spread of malevolent ideologies, we should explore ways to engage young people, who are the most vulnerable to violent extremist narratives.

The United Nations and OIC can benefit from developing joint projects aimed at strengthening our collective capacity to effectively respond to the spread of such phenomena. The focus should be placed on several priority areas.

First, we should focus on consolidating international political will and expertise to reveal drivers of violent extremism, including gross human rights violations, corrupt institutions and poor governance, as emphasized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Secondly, in order to reduce the appeal of and support for terrorist groups, our joint efforts should

combine counter and prevention measures that address shortcomings in governance and promote social development, dialogue, respect for the rule of law and human rights.

Thirdly, the United Nations and OIC can jointly foster a global dialogue for the promotion of tolerance and peace, as well as for a better understanding across societies and cultures, including in the framework of the Alliance of Civilizations.

Fourthly, relevant international assistance should be provided to Members States in adopting more effective policies and approaches to prevent and counter the spread of violent extremist ideology, inter alia, by developing robust national counter-narrative campaigns.

Finally, a more active role should be given to empowering locally credible voices that can help prevent and reverse the spread of violent extremist ideology among the population. That is where OIC's expertise in engaging civil society, and in particular representatives of local communities and religious leaders, as well as women and youth, could play crucial role. That relates in particular to raising public awareness by revealing the truth about would-be jihadis in order to delegitimize their activities, thereby enhancing resistance against them. The victims of terrorism should also play an important role in that kind of comprehensive preventive campaign. The achievement of those objectives will require the consolidation of all existing efforts and strengthening cooperation among all stakeholders, including Governments, civil society and the private sector. Ukraine is fully committed to this joint endeavor and is ready to contribute its share, including through the observer status that we hope OIC will grant us.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): I thank the Senegalese delegation for convening this important debate. I join others in thanking the briefers. I warmly congratulate Mr. Yousef bin Ahmad Al-Othaimeen on his election as Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The United Kingdom looks forward to working with him and with OIC.

As the representative body of 57 Muslim-majority States, OIC speaks with a unique authority on the issues facing the Islamic world, so I am glad that OIC's voice is being heard in the Chamber today. One such issue facing OIC's members — indeed, all Members of the United Nations — is the growing threat of extremist ideologies and violent extremism. Sadly, as we in the Council know only too well, that threat affects Muslim-majority States in a truly disproportionate way, including Iraq, Syria, Libya and many other places. Put simply and starkly, far more Muslim men, women and children have lost their lives at the hands of groups like Al-Shabaab and Da'esh than people of any other faith or religion. The fact that those evil groups claim to represent Islam only makes that reality even more sickening. The United Kingdom is clear that we must tackle violent extremism in all its forms, whether it be radical Islam or neo-Nazism. OIC States are key partners in that fight, and I want to set out today three ways in which our cooperation can help counter those ideologies.

First, it is no coincidence that 18 members of OIC are also members of the Global Coalition Against Da'esh. Among them are our colleagues from Egypt. I want to pay tribute to the work of those two great Egyptian institutions, Al-Azhar and Dar Al-Ifta. Those beacons of Islamic thinking help provide a narrative of tolerance that counters the hate preached by the likes of Da'esh. The United Kingdom is committed to helping spread that narrative and showing the reality of the lies of Da'esh. That is why we are hosting the Coalition's Strategic Communication Cell in London. It draws on the expertise of Coalition members, including our partners from the United Arab Emirates, to help counter the misrepresentation of Islam and its values by Da'esh.

Countering the ideology is partly about offering a competing narrative, but it is also about delivering consequences to those who join Da'esh and supporting survivors of their crimes by giving them a voice and ending impunity. That is why the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom launched a campaign to bring Da'esh to justice, with the Foreign Ministers of Iraq and Belgium on 13 September, the opening date of the new session of the General Assembly. Holding Da'esh accountable is a top priority for the United Kingdom and we are seeking United Nations action to preserve evidence of the crimes of Da'esh as a first step to that end.

My second point is that OIC States have a valuable role to play in building an even stronger consensus around the work of the United Nations to prevent violent extremism. Together, we can make the United Nations system better at understanding and tackling the root causes of terrorism, including by addressing violent extremism narratives. The United Nations is stepping

up in that regard. Last June, the General Assembly directed the United Nations system to implement the relevant recommendations of the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and encouraged States to do the same. We all now need to work to turn those concepts into action. That means mobilizing the correct resources and expertise in order to enable United Nations entities to devise a strategic approach. It also means Member States developing national action plans on preventing violent extremism and helping other Member States do the same.

Thirdly and finally, we need to recognize that countering extremist ideologies is not always about the United Nations or about fighting Da'esh. Sometimes it is about working together to create opportunities that provide an alternative to false ideologies. For example, the Islamic Development Bank serves the economic development needs of the 57 OIC countries, with annual commitments totaling well over $10 billion. All OIC States can use those funds to finance projects that help improve the lives of people living in OIC States. The United Kingdom is proud to be helping that effort. Our collaboration can be seen in the $25-million Arab Women's Enterprise Fund, which will create more jobs for women. It is also seen in the $9 billion that the Bank committed at the London Conference on Syria.

In closing, we look forward to our collaboration with OIC strengthening further. Whether it be through the United Nations, the Coalition against Da'esh or the Islamic Development Bank, it is clear that OIC has a vital role to play in countering the dangerous ideologies that threaten international peace and security.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): We would like to start by thanking the Senegalese delegation for convening this meeting. We are equally grateful to the briefers for their insightful presentations.

Considering the importance that we place on strengthening United Nations cooperation with regional, subregional and intergovernmental organizations in order to more effectively address current conflicts and humanitarian crises, we welcome this timely gathering, which we hope will contribute to improving cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

As the OIC Assistant Secretary General highlighted in his statement, the goals and objectives of OIC and the United Nations are broadly similar. Both organizations are devoted to the cause of international peace, security and development and share common challenges in all domains of human endeavours. The interactions between the United Nations, its organs and specialized agencies with OIC, as portrayed by the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Miroslav Jenča, reveal great potential for development. We think further efforts should be undertaken in order to strengthen those interactions.

Unfortunately, in the past decade we have witnessed the exponential rise of terrorist attacks around the world, which have been perpetrated by a growing number of violent extremist groups that advocate a brand of radical extremism that, contrary to their claims, has nothing to do with Islam, which is a religion that preaches peace and understanding among humankind. As a fundamental part of the efforts to reverse that trend, it is vital first and foremost to end the conflicts in Palestine, Syria, Libya, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, Yemen and elsewhere, which are examples of how foreign interference, oppressive Governments and disenfranchised segments of the population strengthen groups like Da'esh, Al-Qaeda and others, which are at the forefront of international radical extremism.

In order to effectively fight and defeat terrorism and its radical extremist ideology, political processes must be based on inclusivity, including with respect to ethnic and religious groups. In the aforementioned conflicts, one of the main sources of discontent and infighting has been the disenfranchisement of certain social or religious groups, which has created a space and platform for radicalism and extremism. In that regard, we praise the work of OIC in delegitimizing terrorist ideologies by developing counter-narratives to extremist ideologies and propaganda by elevating religious voices that support tolerance and non-violence.

The Republic of Angola, which is constitutionally consecrated as a secular State, separates church and State while also recognizing and respecting different religious values, protecting all creeds and places of worship as long as they act in accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the Republic. Currently, we are witnessing in certain quarters a tendency to politicize religion and use it to justify war and subjugation. As such, we strongly encourage OIC and other organizations to focus more attention on developing strategies to undo this dangerous intertwining of religion and politics, play a more decisive role in countering the deep fracture that the Islamic world is now experiencing, in particular between Sunnis and Shi'as, and protecting religious

minorities. Given multicultural and multiconfessional composition of many Muslim countries, it is crucial to promote interfaith dialogue, tolerance and pluralism, allow all segments of society to practice their faith as they wish, and avoid the use of religious ideas as a tool for power struggles.

In conclusion, we would like to commend OIC and the League of Arab States for their efforts aimed at implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and at mediating ongoing conflicts in the Middle East. We believe that due to ethnic and religious differences, as well as regional power struggles, OIC and the League of Arab States must seek to address the root causes of discontent and curb radical and extremist groups such as Da'esh from spreading hatred, fear and destruction. We further encourage OIC to continue working with the United Nations in addressing the factors that lead to radical extremism and the spread of terrorism in the Islamic world and beyond.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China appreciates the initiative of the Senegalese presidency to convene today's meeting. China attentively listened to the statements of Assistant Secretary-General Jenča; the Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Mr. Opeloyeru; and professor Diagne of Columbia University.

OIC is a major organization of Islamic States designed to promote unity, cooperation and self-improvement. By making use of its religious, historical and cultural advantages, it has played a positive role in promoting the settlement of regional hotspot issues and in facilitating post-conflict reconstruction. Since it attained United Nations observer status, OIC has strengthened cooperation with the United Nations in such areas as dispute prevention and mediation, intercultural dialogue and humanitarian assistance. It has also actively pushed for political settlements in Somalia, Afghanistan, Mali, Libya and the Central African Republic, which has earned it international recognition and appreciation.

China supports the strengthening of cooperation between OIC and the United Nations, consolidating collective security mechanisms in a joint effort to maintain international peace and security. Terrorism is posing a grave threat to international peace and security and is therefore a common challenge for all of humankind. Terrorists and extremist forces propagate terrorist ideology and violent extremism. In certain countries, some people, especially young people, have been hoodwinked into violent extremist and terrorist activities, causing serious harm.

Counter-terrorism is an important area where the United Nations and OIC have conducted significant cooperation. China supports the United Nations and the Security Council in pushing forward their cooperation with OIC in fighting terrorist ideology. Accordingly, China would now like to offer the following comments.

First, we must stick to a unified criteria and forge a sophisticated counter-terrorism network. Acts of terrorism — whenever, wherever, by whomever committed and in whatever forms and manifestations they arise — need to be fought resolutely. Counter-terrorism should not be linked to any specific nationality or religion. The United Nations and the Security Council need to play a leading and coordinating role in international counter-terrorism cooperation. Parties need to implement relevant Security Council resolutions in a comprehensive manner, strengthen exchange of information, border-control and law-enforcement cooperation, combat cross-border training by terrorist organizations, and cut off the transborder flow of terrorists, all of which will serve to put strong international pressure on terrorists.

Secondly, we must give priority to cyber counter-terrorism and cut off the channels for spreading terrorist ideology. The Internet and social media and other high-tech applications have become major platforms for terrorists to spread their ideology and violent extremist ideas. The international community should adopt vigorous measures to strengthen the monitoring of the Internet and crack down on terrorist organizations that are using the Internet to publish incendiary violent videos to spread terrorist ideologies and extremist ideas, recruit operatives, raise funds and plan or implement acts of terrorism.

Thirdly, dialogue among different civilizations to achieve peaceful coexistence and harmony needs to be supported. Dialogue and exchanges are effective tools for enhancing mutual understanding among different civilizations, different religions and different cultures and facilitating inclusion. The international community needs to vigorously promote mutual respect, openness and inclusiveness in a spirit of civilized dialogue and facilitate mutual learning about the diversity of

civilizations, in order to foster a social atmosphere where different nationalities, cultures and religions can treat each other as equals and coexist in harmony and promote civil exchanges aimed at peace while respecting differences and achieving harmony through openness and inclusiveness.

China enjoys deep, friendly and cooperative relations with Islamic States. China attaches great importance to the unique role of OIC, appreciates the significant contribution OIC has made in promoting cooperation among Islamic States, supports OIC in its ongoing efforts to maintain international peace and security and regional peace and security, engage in counter-terrorism and promote common development.

Over the past four decades, China has conducted friendly exchanges with Islamic States and identified the ways for different civilizations, religions and social systems to live together. China is ready to deepen integration of interests under the framework of the One Belt, One Road initiative, strengthen ties, expand dialogue between the Chinese civilization and the Islamic civilization and commit iteself to forging a new type of international relations predicated upon win-win cooperation, all with a view to building a shared community of destiny and creating a safer and better future for humankind.

Mr. Suárez Moreno (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank your delegation, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting, and Mr. Hameed Opeloyeru, Mr. Miroslav Jenča and Mr. Souleymane Bachir Diagne, for their valuable briefings.

For Venezuela, it is of extreme importance to recognize the role played by regional and subregional organization in the peaceful settlement of conflicts, conflict prevention and the establishment of coordinated strategies for the maintenance and building of peace. We believe that, in these regional and subregional forums, the Security Council has important allies in meeting all the challenges to peace and security around the world.

The United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have maintained close cooperation over the last 40 years, particularly in the areas of peace and security, humanitarian assistance to refugees and the promotion of dialogue among civilizations. The strategic cooperation that has contributed to the promotion of the purposes and principles of the foundational charters of both multilateral institutions has undoubtedly been mutually beneficial, in the light of their shared vision, interests and objectives. In that regard, we would note that OIC is a strategic ally of the United Nations, particularly in the fight against terrorism and the spread of violent extremism, including terrorism ideologies and narratives, as the organization regards that scourge as one of the greatest threats to international security in the world today.

In that connection, we once again emphatically condemn all terrorist acts in all of its forms and manifestations, whatever their motivation, wherever they occur, and whosoever commits them. We also affirm that terrorism must not be linked to any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

Venezuela believes that effectively combatting terrorism and violent extremism requires the joint, resolute and coordinated efforts of the international community and the full, non-selective implementation of the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions prohibiting, inter alia, financing, training, harbouring or transferring weapons to terrorist groups. That battle should be waged in the framework of international cooperation under applicable existing international and regional instruments, including the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nation and international law, in full respect for human rights, fundamental liberties and the rule of law.

In that regard, we believe that a preventive approach is always the most appropriate way to combat the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism in a comprehensive manner. We must neutralize the strategies of extremist groups and ideologies that have taken it upon themselves to promote violence and intolerance. We once again highlight the importance of adopting and implementing coordinated initiatives — adapted to each situation and national reality — in order to address the root causes that fuel this despicable phenomenon, to develop effective and innovative strategies to counter extremist and terrorist narratives and to encourage critical thinking within the society with a view to preventing radicalization, recruitment and the mobilization of resources, including the inappropriate use of information and communication technologies.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation has clearly shown that it is committed and attaches great importance to the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, as a great many of its member States have been victims of terrorist attacks. In that regard, we

call for action, including the adoption of a convention on that issue. Recently, our country, in our capacity of president of Non-Aligned Movement countries, participated in OIC's forty-third session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, held October in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. We witnessed the launching of an OIC message centre and the Centre for Dialogue, Peace and Understanding. We are sure they will contribute to the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, including radicalization and incitement, particularly online and in social networks.

Such initiatives, which seek to promote respect for religious, social and cultural diversity, as well as for a culture of peace, tolerance and respect among different nations and societies, complement the efforts of the United Nations to combat terrorism and violent extremism and contribute to using good practices and past successes in drafting a broad international framework to effectively combat terrorist narratives and developing a strategy that counters the propaganda used to encourage, motivate and recruit others to commit terrorist acts, including through distorting religion to justify violence. That proposal will be reviewed by the Council in April 2017.

In conclusion, Venezuela believes that we should continue to strengthen cooperation and strategic alliances between OIC and the United Nations, particularly through bodies such as the Counter-Terrorism Task Force and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. In our view, that is the most effective way to face common challenges and to jointly and collaboratively address the spread of terrorism, violent extremism, the migrant problem and transnational organized crime, and reach peaceful settlements to conflicts, particularly in those areas where OIC has a competitive advantage — its relationship with the Islamic world.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to thank the delegation of Senegal for convening this important briefing on the issue of improving the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation for confronting the violent extremist ideologies leading to terrorism. I should like to thank all of the briefers for their valuable contributions.

Egypt believes that the international community, represented by the United Nations, should have a comprehensive, coordinated and practical strategy to confront the ideology of terrorism — one that relies fundamentally on a partnership with States, regional organizations and, indeed, the actual efforts at that level, in an international legal framework that takes into consideration the fact that confronting the ideologies of terrorism is a very long-term endeavour. The efforts of Islamic States are at the forefront of combatting terrorism. Many of those States have taken many steps through OIC. By way of example, rather than as an exhaustive list, the 1999 Convention on Combatting International Terrorism has been signed by the membership of the organization; a number of very important documents and resolutions on countering terrorism and extremism that leads to terrorism have been adopted; OIC has adopted an Action Plan for 2025 containing priorities that include combatting terrorism and extremism, and their use of social media and the media, in general; and OIC has established the Centre for Dialogue, Peace and Understanding, which uses the Internet and social networks to combat the messages of extremism leading to terrorism.

As everyone knows, strengthening the strategic partnership and cooperation between the United Nations and OIC is necessary, indeed ineluctable, particularly given that OIC is the second largest international organization after the United Nations. Its membership comprises 57 States, spread over four continents. It is an organization with a great deal of experience over many years of fighting terrorism and its consequences, and thus, it is best equipped to combat its ideology.

In that context, we should like to stress the following points, which we believe are necessary to promoting the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in confronting extremist ideologies leading to terrorism. First of all and, most importantly, cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and OIC must be promoted and more effective, and current links between United Nations bodies pertaining to counter-terrorism must be elevated to the highest possible level.

Secondly, there must be a comprehensive strategy for confronting terrorist ideologies. Let me stress in this regard the need to involve OIC in the drafting and implementation of the comprehensive international framework for confronting the messages of terrorist groups, which was called for in S/PRST/2016/6.

Thirdly, institutional cooperation among the bodies of the United Nations and OIC — in particular the

OIC secretariat and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre — is important in order to set priorities for identifying challenges and finding the best means to cooperate and confront terrorist ideologies, including by providing technical assistance to Islamic States and strengthening their capacities in this regard. Those States must be made more capable of completely and effectively implementing relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, as well as those of OIC.

Fourthly, this cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and OIC must be promoted in confronting all types of violent extremism leading to terrorism, in particular Islamophobia and other political, economic and social factors that lead to terrorism, including foreign occupation.

Fifthly, it is necessary to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in order to put an end to any incitement to terrorism. Confronting the narrative of terrorist groups, in particular on social media and the Internet, all while respecting international law and the principle of freedom of expression, human rights and considering the possibility of launching a joint campaign to confront all the erroneous messages used by terrorist organizations to promote themselves for recruitment purposes, while using religious symbols and personalities that enjoy society's trust.

Sixthly and finally, the two organizations must have an exchange of views to increase and diversify their sources of financing and to implement their various projects and programmes to confront terrorist ideologies.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank and commend Senegal for having taken the initiative to facilitate this briefing on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), focused on the area of countering extremist ideologies. We are also very grateful to you, Mr. President, for your concept note (S/2016/965, annex). We also thank Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Miroslav Jenča; Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Mr. Hameed Opeloyeru; and Columbia University Professor, Mr. Souleymane Bachir Diagne, for their presentations.

My own statement will primarily build upon the reflections shared with us by Professor Souleymane Bachir Diagne. I would like to particularly latch onto the emphasis he lent to the issues of pluralism, diversity and the role of education. We cherish the deeply held belief that extremist ideologies are combatted with freedom and tolerance. I hail from a country where people are born and live free and where the freedom of the individual is the cornerstone of society. We, men and women, are free to choose in absolute conditions of equality with no restrictions placed upon us. We, men and women, choose our lifestyles and our education. We elect our Governments, which enjoy legitimacy purely through the exercise of the free voting of the citizens. We choose our religions or we choose to not to have a religion. In that regard, the Constitution of Uruguay, in article 5, provides that all religious beliefs in Uruguay are to be freely enjoyed. The State does not support any religion. The places of worship of the various religions are free of taxes. That is why in my country one often finds churches, mosques, synagogues and syncretistic temples next to each other. People are free to choose their place of worship and does not require Government permission. Religious practice is the personal choice of an individual and the State does not and cannot meddle in any way.

Even in this environment of religious tolerance, we run the risk of intolerance rearing its ugly head. In preventing such an outcome, education, in which boys and girls, men and women, have equal access, plays a crucial role. Education is vital in order to foster an understanding of pluralism, diversity and tolerance. The defence against extremist ideologies begins within our individual societies by combating intolerance and promoting freedom. There can be no doubt that at the international level, the cooperation between States and institutions also has a key role to play in the broader fight against terrorism in this era of complete globalization.

As part of this cooperation, coordinating the efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation is of vital importance. We welcome with great satisfaction the fact that in the final communication of the thirteenth OIC summit, which was held in Istanbul on 14 and 15 April, OIC hailed its own growing cooperation with various international and regional organizations, including, inter alia, the United Nations. On that occasion, OIC also reiterated its full support for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and for the Secretary-General's

Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, which we see as a very positive sign.

By the same token, the determination of its members to remain united in the fight against terrorism and the reaffirmation of the importance of addressing the causes of violent extremism in holistic way are evidence of a joint and comprehensive work, which we commend, and we encourage the protagonists to maintain a steady course along these lines. The battle of ideas must be won by underscoring the values of peaceful coexistence, pluralism, social inclusion and freedom of opinion.

Ms. Sison (United States): I thank Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Miroslav Jenča; Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Mr. Hameed Opeloyeru; and Mr. Souleymane Bachir Diagne for joining us.

Our discussion today is a timely one. Over the past two years, States Members of the United Nations have shown an unprecedented willingness to collaborate on preventing violent extremism. In December 2014, resolution 2178 (2014) called on States to engage local communities and non-governmental actors to counter violent extremism. That was a major step forward. For the first time, the need to counter violent extremism was recognized in a Security Council resolution and an essential element of the solution was identified. Then, in January of this year, the Secretary-General presented his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism to the General Assembly, which included wise recommendations well worth implementing, such as the call for the development of national and regional action plans to prevent violent extremism. This past July, in its fifth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the General Assembly urged States to unite against violent extremism, as and when conducive to terrorism.

The United States welcomes the steps taken by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to partner with the United Nations on that agenda, together with other organizations. We are appreciative of OIC's support of statements on 16 January and 8 April for the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. I would highlight in particular the fruitfulness of the cooperation between OIC and the Global Counter-Terrorism forum in bringing together a diverse group of religious scholars, academics, Government officials and experts in the field of education and preventing violent extremism to discuss best practices and the role of religious education in promoting peace. So how can we build on that recent work by the United Nations and OIC to create an even stronger strategic partnership?

One way would be to create a high-level coordinator for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Such a coordinator would improve communication between the United Nations and OIC on counter-terrorism issues, speaking authoritatively from the United Nations side with a single voice on behalf of the multitude of United Nations entities engaged in countering violent extremism. The coordinator could be a more effective liaison between the United Nations and OIC than is possible under the current framework, which could benefit both organizations. In addition, the coordinator could harness the potential of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force to provide technical and other assistance to Member States and international organizations. Accordingly, we urge all States, in particular OIC members, to express support for such a coordinator to the incoming Secretary-General and his transition team. There is no single step that would do more to strengthen the strategic partnership between the United Nations and OIC.

A second way to enhance the strategic partnership is to recommit ourselves to upholding human rights in all of our activities to counter violent extremism. It is easy for all of us to say that we respect and promote human rights in our countering violent extremism efforts but what matters is whether we actually protect such rights in practice: the right to freedom of expression, freedom of association and peaceful assembly. It is vital for the United Nations and OIC to enshrine human rights in their countering violent extremism strategies and act when States fail to do so.

Of course, such rights are intrinsically important because our people — all people — are entitled to them. But such rights are also practically important, indeed essential, to successfully counter violent extremism. Voices from outside Governments, civil society, community activists, youth leaders, often have more credibility with their peers, fellow citizens, than we as Government officials do on that topic. Generally speaking, they are better advocates for moderation, understanding and peace than we are. We need to ensure that such voices have the freedom, space and confidence to speak.

Thirdly, we must rededicate ourselves to working to counter intolerance and discrimination against any religious group, including Muslims, in each of our countries. Here at the United Nations, we all often emphasize and re-emphasize that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion or nationality but we are not the audience we need to convince. We must continue to do all that we can to convey that message within our own societies. In the 2015 White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism, President Obama noted that inexcusable acts of violence have been committed in the United States and around the world by people of different faiths and that it is not unique to any one group, geography or period of time. That principle is a fundamental part of the United States national strategy to counter violent extremism. We must not lose the momentum we have built here at the United Nations in partnership with OIC and other groups and in our own States and societies in countering violent extremism.

Mr. Safronkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the delegation of Senegal for convening today's very important meeting. Russia strongly advocates building and deepening cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on the basis of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

OIC members are countries whose people profess common spiritual and moral values. Such a uniting factor should play a fundamentally important role in resolving the many complex tasks the international community faces. First and foremost are conflict prevention, mediation and political diplomatic settlement, where the Organization's potential is absolutely needed. Today, the Islamic and Arab worlds are traversing a period of major upheaval, often accompanied by bloody conflict. Helping the people of the region emerge from this dark period is not only the responsibility of the Security Council but a general duty in which OIC, along with other regional and subregional organizations, is called upon to play a unique role. Our common goal, both in the Council and in OIC, should be to pool our efforts to counteract terrorism. In his statement at the seventieth anniversary session of the General Assembly, the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Putin, called for establishing a broad counter-terrorism coalition (see A/70/PV.13). It is an urgent task to be addressed.

We are convinced that violence cannot be justified by any religious pretext and that the actions of terrorists, wherever or by whomever, should be condemned. Any form of support for terrorist activity should be strongly counteracted. We should not try to distinguish between good terrorists and bad terrorists — between one country's terrorists and another country's terrorists. The growing threat from extremist and terrorist groups like the Islamic State poses a direct challenge to the entire international community, above all our partners in OIC.

Recently, the counter-terrorism context has changed considerably. On one hand, there is continued growth in the global terrorist threat. Therefore, now more than ever, we need to clearly and unambiguously define this threat in important United Nations documents, such as Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. On the other hand, the term "violent extremism" — which we see as an integral focus of international counter-terrorist cooperation — has been introduced. It is part of the counter-terrorism prevention efforts — that is, the prevention radical and terrorist phenomena. Misconception is unacceptable, as we could end up disorienting the international community and steering it away from its main task of eliminating terrorism.

It is now important to recognize the vital role of States and their competent authorities in countering terrorism in their own territories and as part of international cooperation efforts. In that regard, I should remind the Council that we have made important comments regarding the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Removing international terrorism from the international legal framework is unacceptable. That undermines the global counter-terrorism architecture and sometimes leads to interference in States' internal affairs. Russia has submitted a draft resolution to the Security Council on countering terrorist ideology, with the goal of achieving real and effective opposition to the promotion of terrorist ideas, including through the Internet.

The pseudo-ideological content under the cover of Islam spread by terrorists is dangerous for Muslim countries first and foremost. We hope that the Islamic world shares the view of Russia on the urgent need to implement and strengthen the approach of the Security Council, and the United Nations as a whole, to curbing terrorism, the spread of its ideologies and its radicalization of populations, especially young people. We hope that our partners will ponder our proposed draft resolution and adopt Russia's initiative.

Russia supports consolidating international efforts to combat the threat that is common to all of us. We firmly believe that the fight against terrorism and the violent extremism that leads to it should be built on a solid foundation of international law under United Nations auspices. We have been providing constant support to the Governments of Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and other countries of the region in their opposition to terrorists. In order to succeed in the fight against terrorism, it is essential that we prioritize attention not only to the military threat posed by jihadist groups, but also to the root causes that have given rise to it. The only way we can deal with the accumulated contradictions is through the united efforts of the entire international community, by deepening our dialogue and our partnerships, while respecting people's right to preserve their cultural, religious and civilizational identity. That requires comprehensive analysis, in which it is essential to consider the interrelationships between all the most acute problems, old and new, afflicting the region. We would like to recall that Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, speaking in a Security Council meeting on the Middle East (see S/PV.7774), called for the convening of a comprehensive review of the situation in the Middle East.

We proceed from the assumption that no conflict, whether in Syria, Libya, Iraq, Yemen, the Sahara and Sahel regions or other long-suffering parts of the world, can be resolved through a military solution. Only a broad national dialogue with the participation of every ethnic, religious and political group and their unity in combating terrorism can produce the agreement, stability and conditions that are critical to the successful socioeconomic development of the countries in areas of conflict. We should particularly emphasize that the crises that have flared more recently should not push the task of settling the Palestinian-Israeli conflict into the background. That should be based on the relevant Security Council resolutions, the Arab Peace Initiative and, of course, the concept of two States, Palestine and Israel, living side by side in peace.

The relationship between Russia and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation is built on dialogue and mutual respect. Our country, which is home to more than 20 million Muslim citizens, is an observer in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and committed to the progressive development of cooperation with the Organization's member States with the goal of achieving security and stability in the world.

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): Malaysia commends Senegal's initiative in convening today's briefing. We would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Miroslav Jenča, Mr. Hameed Opeleyeru, Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and Mr. Souleymayne Bachir Diagne of Columbia University for their participation and presentations.

We believe that the initiatives on preventing and countering extremist ideology anchored by both OIC and the United Nations require a streamlined partnership in order to make a more positive and effective contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. In enhancing the strategic partnership between the United Nations and OIC for curbing extremist ideology, it is important to dissociate terrorism from any religion. The advent of Islamophobia has created a convenient false truth supporting terrorists' agendas, enabling a misleading mindset to prevail as people surrender to irrational responses to terrorism and associate terrorism with religion. The international community should therefore address the increase in Islamophobic sentiments that has led to the marginalization and alienation of Muslims and to discrimination against them on the basis of their religion. Muslims should not be victimized twice — first, by terror attacks, and subsequently by the policy responses to such attacks.

The international community's efforts to counter extremist ideology must be founded on internalizing a culture of peace, tolerance and understanding in the psyche of people who are vulnerable to terrorist groups and targeted by them, especially young people. Those efforts require consistent commitment, resolute effort and unwavering focus on our part. Addressing the root causes of terrorism is vital to an effective strategy and central to the OIC's positions on the issue. Those underlying causes may arise from issues such as the protracted illegal occupation of Palestine, non-inclusive governance, dysfunctional institutions and gross violations of human rights, all of which breed anger, frustration and despair and have proved a powerful tool for recruiting foreign terrorist fighters. In order, therefore, in seeking complementarities in the cooperation between the United Nations and OIC on a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy, we should consider more policies based on dialogue, socioeconomic inclusion and non-discrimination in

support of minority groups. Malaysia believes that exploring synergies on such policies will bring long-term and sustainable benefits to pluralistic societies.

Both OIC and the United Nations have provided the international community with an exhaustive list of instruments, plans of action and documents as guiding principles for playing an effective role in combating terrorism and countering extremist ideology. We see value in streamlining the shared goals and agendas of OIC and the United Nations in order to address the many dimensions of extremist ideology. The recommendations made, which include technical assistance for capacity-building, developing a regional contact list of focal points and establishing early warning centres for exchanging information on violent extremist activities, could be effective when undertaken within a framework of constructive cooperation with States and international and regional organizations. It would undermine our agenda to belabour the issues and ponder what we should do; rather, we should act now and implement those measures as quickly as possible.

We are also pleased to see the continuing synergy between the United Nations and OIC through the continuing cooperation that has been expressed this year, as evidenced this year in the support shown for the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism in OIC's communiqué on the 13th Islamic Summit.

Malaysia looks forward to the efforts that have been launched by the OIC General Secretariat to establish a messaging centre aimed at countering terrorist narratives through counter-messaging on social media sites, juxtaposing true interpretations of the Koran and Hadith on ideological subjects and exposing the machinations of the deviant extremist groups that propagate hate, terror and violence. As far as possible, the OIC messaging centre should coordinate its activities and messages with other, similar centres, including the Abu Dhabi-based Sawab Centre and the Kuala Lumpur-based Regional Digital Counter Messaging Centre for Southeast Asia, established in July. It is essential that information and clarification on the core Islamic values of peace, tolerance and moderation, among others, be disseminated to the widest possible audience.

In addition, close cooperation with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force would assist in crafting relevant messages on effective counter-terrorism and counter-violent extremism policies and implementation measures for a broader audience. As such, the newly established OIC Peace, Security and Conflict Resolution Unit could also benefit from closer interaction with the United Nations Department of Political Affairs' Mediation Support Unit and the lessons learned from their experiences through ongoing dialogue and exchanges.

Before concluding, Malaysia wishes also to pay tribute to the OIC secretariat and the United Nations for its initiatives to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. As a member of OIC, we reiterate our utmost support to OIC for ensuring the success of those initiatives. We continue to call on the full support of all OIC member States to continue working effectively with the United Nations so as to ensure the success of these initiatives.

Mrs. Gueguen Mohsen (France) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to begin by thanking our briefers for their enlightening statements. I also thank Senegal for taking the initiative to convene this meeting with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on a matter of such mutual concern — the fight against violent extremism. That is an issue at the crux of our shared concerns and affects all of our societies, irrespective of their cultural identity or geographical location. That being said, we need to understand the issue and react appropriately, as highlighted by our briefers. Cooperation between the United Nations and OIC is important on all fronts but particularly in terms of the need for pluralism and environmental awareness.

I would like to begin with the positive by highlighting the significant successes seen this year in the fight against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq and Syria. The Monitoring Team of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida,and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities indicated in a recent report that the total volume of online propaganda spread by the group has decreased. That represents steps forward that deserve to be highlighted.

Nevertheless, reality forces us to acknowledge that ISIL continues to exercise significant appeal over a number of individuals, particularly young people, in many countries — my own country being no exception. More needs to be done to counter that phenomenon.

Terrorist group propaganda, and particularly that of ISIL, seeks to entice future recruits by playing on political, economic and social motivations, as well as psychological ones, which are dangerously powerful. Specialists who have studied the subject have clearly demonstrated that there is no unique profile of a potential recruit nor any simple explanation as to why individuals decide, sometimes incredibly rapidly, to join a terrorist group. The reasons are multiple and complex, combining collective mindsets and individual trajectories, the broad sweep of history, personal experiences and security, geopolitics, justice and mental health issues.

Recruiters attract young people by playing on their feelings of injustice and marginalization. They appeal to their need for money and recognition, promising them an ideal and a cause to defend, when in fact they find nothing but tyranny, brutality and death. They use the fascinating power of images to stun and manipulate their targets' minds and even, if necessary, known brainwashing techniques to lead their subjects to reject their academic, professional and even familial environments. They are particularly effective in two environments: on the Internet and in prisons. Their ideology of chaos is at the heart of terrorist propaganda and has the dual purpose of spreading terror throughout the majority and recruiting new fighters from a restricted minority.

I would now like to turn to a second broad point. Faced with such a large threat, each and every State and regional organization has a role to play to shatter that large-scale recruitment exercise. Against the current backdrop, strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and OIC is more crucial than ever. Earlier, the Ambassador of Spain offered many, very interesting proposals along those lines, explaining how we might enhance such cooperation, which could help us to better understand the factors that lead to violent radicalization and terrorism, as well as improve our collective action in the fight against the terrorist threat. Naturally, we must — and this is essential — take care so as not to create false conflations. Muslims are by far the principal victims of terrorism.

Our two institutions share common goals. The OIC Programme of Action 2025, adopted at the OOIC Summit in Istanbul in April, and an earlier 10-year action plan called for the strengthening of the role of OIC in matters of conflict prevention, confidence-building, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation in its member States, as well as in conflict situations involving Muslim communities.

The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism provide an excellent framework for cooperation with OIC. As was highlighted by the General Assembly in June, priority must henceforth be given to the implementation of the principal recommendations of the Plan of Action. That responsibility falls, first and foremost, on member States and regional organizations, but the United Nations will be there to assist them in establishing normative frameworks or enhanced operational capacity building activities. The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre can also take on some of the burden of that strengthened cooperation.

Finally, while strengthening cooperation between States and between organizations, we must pursue efforts to counter terrorist propaganda with the help of the private sector, civil society organizations and grassroots actors, all of whom contribute to forging trusting civil societies that are diverse and democratic and can generate employment for their young people.

France is greatly attached to the freedom of thought and speech and recognizes the deep extent to which they are intertwined with the freedom of belief and other fundamental freedoms that pave the way for respect for pluralism and the views of others. Those principles must be the driving force behind our teachings, actions and practices. I fully endorse what Mr. Diagne had to say along those lines regarding the pressing need to increase our understanding and attachment to pluralism.

We must fight terrorism and its propaganda of hatred with unrelenting determination and with the necessary and proportionate means and the full arsenal of the law, while fully respecting fundamental freedoms. Those are the same human rights that the terrorists wish to destroy, as they are the very bedrock of our democracies. France will continue to contribute fully to such endeavours.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): I thank Senegal for organizing this debate and the briefers for their important statements. Presidential statement S/PRST/2013/16 of October 2013, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) provided long overdue recognition of OIC's growing role in preventing and resolving conflict, as well as of the potential for

enhanced collaboration with the United Nations in those efforts.

Three years on, the need for a strong partnership between the United Nations and OIC has never been greater. The past few years have been traumatic ones for communities across the Islamic world. Many countries with significant Muslim populations are experiencing instability and, in some cases, violent internal conflicts. In many settings that instability has unleashed sectarian tensions that have been exploited by violent extremist groups to stir up hatred and division. Ethnic and religious communities, which in many cases have lived peacefully together for centuries, have been turned against one another. That is tearing at the social fabric of much of the Middle East and North Africa, in particular. It is contributing to population movements that have disturbing implications for the future stability and cohesion of many States. Echoes of those strains and intolerances are also being heard in countries far removed from the centres of Islamic faith.

OIC has an important role to play in countering those messages of hate, in tamping down the embers of conflict and in promoting healing, reconciliation and understanding. OIC's standing in the Islamic world and its deep understanding of the religious and cultural context of Islamic communities make it uniquely placed to promote peace and reconciliation by amplifying the voices of tolerance and moderation. I wish to highlight three areas in which enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC can reinforce their respective abilities to support international peace and security.

First, we welcome OIC's efforts over the past decade to strengthen its capacity to contribute to conflict prevention and resolution. New Zealand has been a consistent advocate for a sharper United Nations focus on conflict prevention and for strengthened cooperation with regional and other partners in support of such efforts. OIC is a natural partner in that regard.

Through its Peace, Security and Mediation Unit, OIC has supported mediation efforts in Afghanistan, Mali, the Central African Republic and Somalia, as well as in Thailand and the Philippines in my own region — to name but a few examples. OIC brings to those efforts a unique authority and an ability to reach, work with and mobilize communities and religious leaders in the cause of peace. We encourage OIC to continue and expand that important work.

Nowhere is that need greater than in the efforts to halt the fighting and reconcile and heal divisions between Islamic communities in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and the occupied Palestinian territories. The political, military and religious leaders of those countries need to be encouraged and supported in their efforts to bring the suffering of their peoples to an end, including by showing leadership and making the hard political decisions needed to help bring those conflicts to a peaceful resolution. And affected communities will need help in finding ways to live peacefully with each other once more. In close cooperation with the United Nations and other international mediators, OIC has a potentially significant role to play in supporting those efforts. We welcome its participation in the work of the International Syria Support Group and its mediation efforts in Iraq.

Secondly, we acknowledge the tremendous contribution made by many OIC countries in managing the unprecedented global refugee flows that the international community currently faces. Five of the six countries hosting the largest refugee populations are OIC members, collectively hosting more than 6 million people. OIC members are also among the largest humanitarian donors. We also acknowledge the role played by OIC itself in supporting humanitarian work in settings such as Somalia and Darfur, as well as in some of our near neighbours in South-East Asia.

But it is perhaps in preventing and combating violent extremism that we see the greatest potential and need for OIC to contribute in the years ahead. Many communities around the world currently face severe challenges from extremist forces that manifest themselves in many ways, from terrorism and violent extremism, through to aggressively intolerant and exclusionary political and religious movements. Those battles can be fought and won only by way of dialogue and voices within the affected cultures and communities speaking up for peace.

We commend OIC's long-standing commitment to promote understanding among different faiths and communities and to reject all forms of intolerance. All of those in the international community who support moderation and the maintenance of peaceful, inclusive societies must also do their part to support those efforts. That means cooperating with communities so as to prevent the radicalization of our youth and to re-educate and rehabilitate those who fall victim to extremist narratives. It means confronting and defeating

the politics of hatred and exclusion in our communities. And it means working together internationally to amplify the voices of tolerance and moderation.

That is why New Zealand has been a regular partner to OIC and its members in supporting initiatives that promote dialogue and understanding, such as interfaith dialogue and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. And that is why we have been a strong supporter of the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. The Plan of Action provides an important blueprint and a useful practical resource for other international actors in that space, including OIC. We encourage OIC to deepen its cooperation with the United Nations in that area.

In the light of the many challenges, New Zealand welcomes the OIC 2025 Programme of Action, adopted in April of this year, which sets out a range of actions to strengthen OIC's role in conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding. The actions agreed at the biennial United Nations-OIC consultations in May provide a useful framework for further strengthening OIC's strategic partnership with the United Nations system in pursuing those goals. New Zealand is confident that the partnership can make a practical difference in restoring peace and security to Muslim and non-Muslim communities alike in the years ahead.

Mr. Akahori (Japan) (*spoke in French*): I also would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Jenča and Mr. Opeloyeru for their briefings, and especially to Mr. Diagne for his informative intervention.

The international community today faces a wide range of challenges, such as terrorism, social unrest, political turmoil and prolonged conflict. The Muslim world in particular faces serious issues, including the spread of violent extremism. It is therefore encouraging that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is dedicated to preventing and countering extremist ideology through its strategic partnership with the United Nations and other efforts.

Japan believes that conflict and violent extremism are rooted in, and exacerbated by, weak governance. In our view, the key factors necessary for stable societies in the Muslim world, a region of remarkable diversity, are inclusiveness and coexistence. Efforts towards national reconciliation, administrative reform and fiscal consolidation are fundamentally important in creating well-governed and inclusive societies.

It is very encouraging that OIC shares that view and is undertaking an inclusive and comprehensive approach in tackling extremism. OIC's efforts towards fostering global dialogue and cooperation by addressing the root causes of terrorism can lead to enhanced social stability and human capital, thereby alleviating the risk of marginalization.

We believe that OIC can play a more prominent role in dealing with the imminent challenges facing the Muslim world today. Actions aimed at meeting urgent humanitarian needs on the ground and at supporting the return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons are in line with OIC's stated objectives.

OIC's contributions to humanitarian efforts in Yemen are commendable. It can do more on Syria, both in the humanitarian and in the political domains. Efforts aimed at supporting the Israel-Palestine peace process and improving relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia also offer opportunities for OIC to achieve its long-standing goals, which would, in turn, be of benefit to the entire international community.

The presidential statement of 28 October 2013 (S/PRST/2013/16) on cooperation between the United Nations and OIC includes many insights that remain useful and relevant today. We welcome the reference made by the representative of New Zealand to that document.

Japan is confident that OIC will play an active role in overcoming challenges and resolving conflict, thereby enhancing its confidence-building role.

I thank the President of the Council for convening today's meeting, which offers an excellent opportunity for encouraging OIC in its endeavours and for enhancing the strategic partnership between the United Nations and OIC.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my national capacity as the representative of Senegal.

I wish to thank today's briefers for their presentations of outstanding quality and clarity. Given the remarks that have been delivered, I will not revisit the framework of mechanisms and modalities of the multidimensional cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Our meeting this morning has established that such cooperation, seen from the point of view of the

fight against extremist ideology, shows the vitality of the relations between the two organizations, which share the same ideals of peace, security and security and development, to name a few.

The convergence of objectives forms the basis of the dynamic framework of cooperation between the United Nations and OIC, marked in particular by the holding of biannual coordination meetings for more than 25 years, the last of which took place in May 2016 in Geneva, leading to the adoption of a framework defining all areas of cooperation, as well as the modalities and mechanisms of implementation.

The vitality of the cooperation between the United Nations and OIC is also evident on the ground, where those great institutions have had a very positive impact working closely on the restoration of peace and security around the world, including in Palestine, Afghanistan, Yemen, in Europe in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and also in Africa in Sierra Leone, Mali, the Central African Republic, Somalia, Libya and Darfur, among others. The joint efforts of OIC and the United Nations in all areas of international cooperation, including institutions such as the World Health Organization, not only in the fight against major pandemics, but also in the framework of intercultural dialogue and fighting violent extremism and terrorism, have been most important.

With regard to terrorism and violent extremism, the delegation of Senegal welcomes the effective collaboration between OIC and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, especially in support of capacity-building aimed at preventing the phenomena of extremism and terrorism. The discourse and, unfortunately, the actions of terrorism and extremism continue to deeply destabilize our societies by corrupting some of our young people and women, leading the future of our nations towards a dead end. We must recognize that the current scope and new forms of terrorism make the fight against it even more complex. States, international organizations and civil society must adapt and coordinate strategies and methods for addressing it.

The Muslim world, which includes the countries that are paying the highest price occasioned by terrorism, needs more than ever for OIC to be its voice. Indeed, the unjustifiable acts of terrorism hurt Muslims and lead unfairly to mistrust or even fear of the religion of Islam. Senegal, which solemnly reiterates its condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, also refutes, in this very Chamber, any attempt to attribute terrorism to any religion, culture or civilization, just as it denounces the desire to manipulate some groups of misled people with a view to turning them Islamophobic.

Meanwhile, we welcome the significant progress made on the ground in the fight against Da'esh, Boko Haram and Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Iraq, Syria, the Great Lakes Region of Africa and the Sahel, but we must agree that security alone is no longer a suitable solution in efforts to address the scourge of terrorism. For however many terrorists are physically eliminated, the ideology that underpins their actions remains alive, as long as that ideology is not destroyed. Furthermore, ulemas, scholars, intellectuals and other educators around the world have a significant role to play in deconstructing that ideology, a task that requires dynamic interaction with youth, women and all vulnerable groups, in order to pass on the message of peace and moderation of the sacred book of Muslims the Koran, and the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed. That preventive strategy seems quite appropriate and fortunately occupies an important place on the agenda of our two organizations, which have made intercultural dialogue an essential component.

The close collaboration between OIC and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations is evidence of that relationship. We align ourselves with the strategy that stresses education for youth and women, and the importance of better media in the fight against violent extremism and terrorism. It would indeed be most effective to educate youth and women with the relevant information. Senegal therefore calls for broader participation of young people and women in the design and implementation of any future strategies dealing with the scourge of terrorism, because they, the youth and women, are the main targets and also the main victims of it.

President Macky Sall of Senegal, in his added capacity as Chair of the Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, announced, at the thirteenth Islamic Summit held in Istanbul in April, the launch of an international award to recognize the media and the women and men of the media who exemplify tolerance and intercultural harmony by fostering dialogue. I call on all States members of OIC and the United Nations to support that award, which will surely encourage the press to work towards peace and stability.

If extremism has been able to thrive to such a worrying extent, it is because the conditions of its propagation are ripe within the vulnerable factions of our populations that are strongly impacted by poverty and underemployment, thereby leading to a breeding ground for terrorism. It is in all of our interests to strengthen our strategy in the fight against poverty and underemployment. The new OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action 2016-2025 gives an important place to the eradication of extreme poverty in the member countries. That goal is shared by the United Nations and therefore requires our coordinated action for greater effectiveness.

In closing, I would like to thank the contributors, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, who are aware of the magnitude and complexity of the challenges, which is why they have been working for years to strengthen organized and productive cooperation between the two organizations. We urge António Guterres, the Secretary-General-designate of the United Nations, and Dr. Yusuf Al-Othaimeen to persevere in carrying out that duty. We should also build upon what was said by Mr. Souleymane Bachir Diagne, namely, to use education, enhance pluralism and promote environmental awareness everywhere and at all levels.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Opeloyeru to make observations on the statements delivered.

Mr. Opeloyeru: Mine is just a vote of appreciation.

Let me express, at the close of this very important meeting, and also on behalf of the new OIC Secretary General Yusuf Al-Othaimeen, who was just sworn in a few hours ago by the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, our sincere appreciation and gratitude for the briefers' profound contribution and constructive and meaningful insights, suggestions and advisory opinions on the ways and means of widening and reaching strategic cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC in all spheres, especially on the topical issue of combatting terrorism and violent extremism internationally.

I also wish to thank United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Miroslav Jenča and Mr. Souleymane Bachir Diagne for the input and insight that they have added to this debate. The various suggestions put forward at this meeting will certainly be taken on board as we update the United Nations-OIC joint inventory of activities and the matrix of our joint actions for the current biennium, as well as the actions to be taken by our generous secretariat and the respective intervention programmes being undertaken by our member States. Undoubtedly, we remain committed to consolidating and expanding the excellent and flourishing relations between the United Nations and OIC, in the interest of a peaceful and secure world.

Finally, we have also considered the value of the fruitful exchanges that we have in the Council, and for that purpose we fervently look forward to another briefing session on agreed topical issues of mutual interest on a sustained and regular basis, perhaps biannually. That will align with the priorities of the United Nations-OIC Coordination Meeting, held alternately every two years at the headquarters of both organizations, so that we can also benefit from the traditional and collective wisdom that emanates from this Chamber.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.